UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/ECE/1358
6 January 1998

ORIGINAL : ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Fifty-third session
(21-23 April 1998)

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FIFTY-THIRD SESSION

to be held in the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
starting at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 21 April 1998

1. Adoption of the Agenda

2. Strengthening cooperation within the ECE region

   (a) Major trends in the ECE region

   (b) Operational activities and cooperation with subregional groupings, interests and initiatives

   (c) Cooperation with the business community and NGOs

3. Implementation of the Reform and preparations for the ECOSOC review of the regional commissions

   (a) Exchange of views on the implementation of the reform, with the participation of Principal Subsidiary Bodies

   (b) Exchange of views on intersectoral issues and cross-sectoral concerns, with the participation of Principal Subsidiary Bodies

   (c) Relations with other regional, subregional and global organizations and institutions

GE.98-20010

(d) Commission Session

(e) Other matters arising from the work of subsidiary bodies requiring decision by the Commission

4. Election of Officers

5. Other business

6. Annual Report of the Commission

EXPLANATORY NOTES TO AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

General

1. The dates of 21 to 23 April 1998 have been reserved for the fifty-third session of the Commission. In accordance with the Commission's Rules of Procedure, the documents referred to in the Provisional Agenda will, wherever possible, be transmitted to Governments not less than forty-two days before the opening of the session, i.e. not later than 10 March 1998.

2. The provisional agenda has been conceived taking into account the revised structure of the annual session contained in Chapter III of the Plan of Action, as well as other requirements mentioned in the Plan of Action relating to the implementation of the Reform. Pursuant to the Secretary-General's reform efforts, the Agenda also includes an item relating to the review of the regional commissions by ECOSOC.

3. As part of the ongoing efforts of all concerned to revitalize the sessions of the Commission, the Bureau believes that the practice of delivering prepared statements should be discontinued and that instead delegations should limit themselves to specific observations and proposals for action. Any delegations wishing to provide a text for distribution are requested to provide the secretariat, preferably in advance of the Session, with sufficient copies (approximately 70).

4. As decided in the Plan of Action, the annual session will be preceded, on 20 April 1998, by a seminar; this year's seminar will be on Enterprise and Bank Restructuring in the Transition Economies.

* * * * *

Item 1: Adoption of the Agenda

5. The adoption of the agenda will be followed by opening remarks by the Chairman of the Commission and the Executive Secretary.

Item 2: Strengthening cooperation within the ECE region

(a) Major trends in the ECE region

6. As called for in the Plan of Action, a one-day debate will be organized on a major economic theme. It is suggested that the debate for this year's session might focus on those factors which risk increasing divergences in economic development among the countries of the region.

7. In a short introduction to the Economic Survey of Europe, the secretariat will highlight these factors. A representative of a financial institution will comment thereon. This presentation will set the stage for a debate structured as follows:

(i) The fragility of the banking system in the transition economies and their vulnerability to external shocks: could a crisis similar to those which occurred in Latin America and in Asia occur in Europe? This segment will be initiated with the views of three panellists and benefit from the conclusions of the preceding day's seminar on Enterprise and Bank Restructuring in the Transition Economies.

(ii) The economic uncertainties facing European countries outside the Euro zone. The debate will be introduced by two personalities who could address the uncertainties linked to the strength of the Euro and implications for the monetary and trade policies of non-Euro countries.

(iii) The economic risks as well as the benefits to the region of increased globalization. The debate will be introduced by two personalities who could address how regional cooperation could mitigate the risks and increase the benefits.

8. To ensure an interesting debate, panellists/personalities will be invited from Governments, financial institutions and banks, and academic circles. As indicated above, there will be no statements. After the introduction of each segment, member countries are invited to react accordingly.

9. To facilitate reaction from member countries, an informal note on the issues will be distributed in advance by the secretariat.

(b) Operational activities and cooperation with subregional groupings, interests and initiatives

10. The Commission will have before it, as background information, a short report on the Commission's Operational Activities (E/ECE/1359), which will cover, inter alia:

- the state of the implementation of the ECE mandate to respond to the specific needs of the countries in transition;

- ECE's cooperation with subregional groupings, initiatives and interests (including the Commonwealth of Independent States, Black Sea Economic Cooperation, Southeast European Cooperative Initiative, Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia, Central European Initiative, Mediterranean, Baltic);
  (Cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe is addressed under agenda item 3 below)

- The Regional Advisory Services Programme.

11. Discussion under this item will focus on whether operational activities should be organized more on a subregional basis or more on a country-by-country basis.

(c) Cooperation with the business community and NGOs

12. A background note (E/ECE/1360) will be available to facilitate an exchange of views on ethical guidelines governing relationships with the business community, following which the Commission will provide guidance to the ad hoc working group which will, as per the Plan of Action, be established to consider this issue. The note will also address the cross-sectoral concern identified in the Plan of Action relating to the involvement of the business community in all ECE activities.

Item 3: Implementation of the Reform and preparations for the ECOSOC review of the regional commissions

(a) Exchange of views on the implementation of the reform, with the participation of Principal Subsidiary Bodies

13. A short report on implementation of the reform (E/ECE/1361) will include, inter alia:

- information on the review conducted by PSBs on the status of their related bodies (see Plan of Action, Chapter III, A. Reforms of the Commission and the PSBs);
- a summary of any difficulties encountered in implementing the reform;
- as appropriate, suggestions for addressing these difficulties.

(b) Exchange of views on intersectoral issues and cross-sectoral concerns, with the participation of Principal Subsidiary Bodies

14. The above-mentioned report E/ECE/1361 will also deal with intersectoral issues, particularly as they relate to transport and environment (Chapter II of the Plan of Action). In this connection, the convening of a joint meeting of the Bureaux of the Inland Transport Committee and the Committee on Environmental Policy in June 1998 will be discussed. In addition to intersectoral issues, the Plan of Action addresses cross-sectoral concerns. "Special concern for economies in transition" is dealt with under this sub-item. The "involvement of the business community" is covered under agenda item 2 (c) above. The two other cross-sectoral concerns will be reported on at the fifty-fourth session of the Commission in 1999.

15. There will be no statements by PSB Chairmen on the work of the PSBs. Discussion/debate will focus on difficulties encountered in the implementation of the reform and suggestions for related action and intersectoral activities.

(c) Relations with other regional, subregional and global organizations and institutions

16. The Commission will have before it a short note (E/ECE/1362) which will update information on ECE's relations with other regional, subregional and global organizations and institutions, both within and outside the UN System:

European Commission, Council of Europe, OSCE, OECD, EBRD, WTO, UNDP, UNEP, UNCTAD, DESA etc.

17. The debate will focus on the ECE contribution to the ECOSOC review of the regional commissions which will consider the core competencies of the regional commissions vis-à-vis global bodies and other regional and subregional intergovernmental bodies, with a view to determining the most appropriate division of labour.

(d) Commission Session

18. The Commission decided at its fifty-second session that the Group of Experts on the Programme of Work would report its findings to the Commission after examining all relevant legal and other issues related to biennialization of the annual session. A note by the Chairman of the Commission on this matter (E/ECE/1363) will be before the Commission, highlighting all issues raised during the Chairman's consultations, including that related to maintaining the support and interest of Governments' central administrations.

(e) Other matters arising from the work of subsidiary bodies requiring decision by the Commission

19. Under sub-item (b), the Commission will deal with any matter arising from the work of the subsidiary bodies which requires decision by the Commission.

Item 4: Election of Officers

Item 5: Other business

Item 9: Annual report of the Commission

Closure of the session.

SUMMARY TABLE

Date	Agenda Item	ECE Documents
Tuesday, 21 April: morning	1. Opening of the session - Adoption of the Agenda 2. Strengthening cooperation within the ECE region (a) Major trends in the ECE region: (I) The fragility of the banking system in the transition economies. (ii) The economic uncertainties facing European countries outside the Euro zone. (iii) The economic risks as well as the benefits to the region of increased globalization.	E/ECE/1358
Tuesday, 21 April: afternoon	2. Strengthening cooperation within the ECE region (continued) (a) Major trends in the ECE region (continued)	
Wednesday, 22 April: morning	2. Strengthening cooperation within the ECE region (continued) (b) Operational activities and cooperation with subregional groupings, interests and initiatives (c) Cooperation with the business community and NGOs	E/ECE/1359 E/ECE/1360
Wednesday, 22 April: afternoon	3. Implementation of the Reform and preparations for the ECOSOC review of the regional commissions (a) Exchange of views on the implementation of the reform, with the participation of PSBs	E/ECE/1361

Date	Agenda Item	ECE Documents
Thursday, 23 April: morning	**3. Implementation of the Reform and preparations for the ECOSOC review of the regional commissions (continued)**	
	(b) Exchange of views on intersectoral issues and cross-sectoral concerns, with the participation of PSBs	**E/ECE/1361**
	(c) Relations with other regional, subregional and global organizations and institutions	**E/ECE/1362**
	(d) Commission Session	**E/ECE/1363**
	(e) Other matters arising from the work of subsidiary bodies requiring decision by the Commission	
Thursday, 23 April: afternoon	**4 Election of officers**	
	5. Other business	
	6. Annual Report of the Commission	

UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/ECE/1358/Rev.1
11 February 1998

ORIGINAL : ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Fifty-third session
(21-23 April 1998)

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FIFTY-THIRD SESSION

to be held in the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
starting at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 21 April 1998

1. Adoption of the Agenda

2. Strengthening cooperation within the ECE region

   (a) Major trends in the ECE region

   (b) Operational activities and cooperation with subregional groupings, interests and initiatives

   (c) Cooperation with the business community and NGOs

3. Implementation of the Reform and preparations for the ECOSOC review of the regional commissions

   (a) Exchange of views on the implementation of the reform, with the participation of Principal Subsidiary Bodies

   (b) Exchange of views on intersectoral issues and cross-sectoral concerns, with the participation of Principal Subsidiary Bodies

   (c) Relations with other regional, subregional and global organizations and institutions

(d) Commission Session

(e) Other matters arising from the work of subsidiary bodies requiring decision by the Commission

4. Election of Officers

5. Other business

6. Annual Report of the Commission

EXPLANATORY NOTES TO AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

General

1. The dates of 21 to 23 April 1998 have been reserved for the fifty-third session of the Commission. In accordance with the Commission's Rules of Procedure, the documents referred to in the Provisional Agenda will, wherever possible, be transmitted to Governments not less than forty-two days before the opening of the session, i.e. not later than 10 March 1998.

2. The provisional agenda has been conceived taking into account the revised structure of the annual session contained in Chapter III of the Plan of Action, as well as other requirements mentioned in the Plan of Action relating to the implementation of the Reform. Pursuant to the Secretary-General's reform efforts, the Agenda also includes an item relating to the review of the regional commissions by ECOSOC.

3. As part of the ongoing efforts of all concerned to revitalize the sessions of the Commission, the Bureau believes that the practice of delivering prepared statements should be discontinued and that instead delegations, PSB chairmen and representatives from other organizations/initiatives should limit themselves to specific observations and proposals for action. Any delegations wishing to provide a text for distribution are requested to provide the secretariat, preferably in advance of the Session, with sufficient copies (approximately 70).

4. As decided in the Plan of Action, the annual session will be preceded, on 20 April 1998, by a seminar; this year's seminar will be on Enterprise and Bank Restructuring in the Transition Economies.

* * * * *

Item 1: Adoption of the Agenda

5. The adoption of the agenda will be followed by opening remarks by the Chairman of the Commission and the Executive Secretary.

Item 2: Strengthening cooperation within the ECE region

(a) Major trends in the ECE region

6. As called for in the Plan of Action, a one-day debate will be organized on a major economic theme. It is suggested that the debate for this year's session might focus on those factors which may increase divergences in economic development among the countries of the region.

7. In a short introduction to the Economic Survey of Europe, the secretariat will highlight these factors. A representative of a financial institution will comment thereon. This presentation will set the stage for a debate structured as follows:

(i) The fragility of the banking system in the transition economies and their vulnerability to external shocks: could a crisis similar to those which occurred in Latin America and in Asia occur in Europe? This segment will be initiated with the views of three panellists and benefit from the conclusions of the preceding day's seminar on Enterprise and Bank Restructuring in the Transition Economies.

(ii) The economic opportunities and challenges presented by the introduction of the Euro for non-EU countries and the implications for their monetary and trade policies.

(iii) The economic risks as well as the benefits to the region of increased globalization. The debate will be introduced by two personalities who could address how regional cooperation could mitigate the risks and increase the benefits.

8. To ensure an interesting debate, panellists/personalities will be invited from Governments, financial institutions and banks, and academic circles. As indicated above, there will be no statements. After the introduction of each segment, member countries are invited to react accordingly.

9. To facilitate reaction from member countries, an informal note on the issues will be distributed in advance by the secretariat.

(b) <u>Operational activities and cooperation with subregional groupings, interests and initiatives</u>

10. The Commission will have before it, as background information, a short report on the Commission's Operational Activities (E/ECE/1359), which will cover, inter alia:

- the state of the implementation of the ECE mandate to respond to the specific needs of the countries in transition;

- ECE's cooperation with subregional groupings, initiatives and interests (including the Commonwealth of Independent States, Black Sea Economic Cooperation, Southeast European Cooperative Initiative, Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia, Central European Initiative, Mediterranean, Baltic);
  (Cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe is addressed under agenda item 3 below)

- The Regional Advisory Services Programme.

11. Discussion under this item will address the question of whether operational activities should be organized more on a subregional basis or more on a country-by-country basis.

(c) Cooperation with the business community and NGOs

12. A background note (E/ECE/1360) will be available to facilitate an exchange of views on ethical guidelines governing relationships with the business community, following which the Commission will provide guidance to the ad hoc working group which will, as per the Plan of Action, be established to consider this issue. The note will also address the cross-sectoral concern identified in the Plan of Action relating to the involvement of the business community in all ECE activities.

Item 3: Implementation of the Reform and preparations for the ECOSOC review of the regional commissions

(a) Exchange of views on the implementation of the reform, with the participation of Principal Subsidiary Bodies

13. A short report on implementation of the reform (E/ECE/1361) will include, inter alia:

- information on the review conducted by PSBs on the status of their related bodies (see Plan of Action, Chapter III, A. Reforms of the Commission and the PSBs);

- a summary of any difficulties encountered in implementing the reform;

- as appropriate, suggestions for addressing these difficulties.

(b) Exchange of views on intersectoral issues and cross-sectoral concerns, with the participation of Principal Subsidiary Bodies

14. The above-mentioned report E/ECE/1361 will also deal with intersectoral issues, particularly as they relate to transport and environment (Chapter II of the Plan of Action). In this connection, the convening of a joint meeting of the Bureaux of the Inland Transport Committee and the Committee on Environmental Policy in June 1998 will be discussed. In addition to intersectoral issues, the Plan of Action addresses cross-sectoral concerns. "Special concern for economies in transition" is dealt with under this sub-item. The "involvement of the business community" is covered under agenda item 2 (c) above. The two other cross-sectoral concerns will be reported on at the fifty-fourth session of the Commission in 1999.

15. There will be no statements by PSB Chairmen on the work of the PSBs. Discussion/debate will focus on difficulties encountered in the implementation of the reform and suggestions for related action and intersectoral activities.

(c) Relations with other regional, subregional and global organizations and institutions

16. The Commission will have before it a short note (E/ECE/1362) which will update information on ECE's relations with other regional, subregional and global organizations and institutions, both within and outside the UN System: European Commission, Council of Europe, OSCE, OECD, WTO, UNDP, UNEP, UNCTAD, HABITAT etc.

17. The debate will focus on the ECE contribution to the ECOSOC review of the regional commissions which will consider the core competencies of the regional commissions vis-à-vis global bodies and other regional and subregional intergovernmental bodies, with a view to determining the most appropriate division of labour.

(d) Commission Session

18. The Commission decided at its fifty-second session that the Group of Experts on the Programme of Work would report its findings to the Commission after examining all relevant legal and other issues related to biennialization of the annual session. A note by the Chairman of the Commission on this matter (E/ECE/1363) will be before the Commission, highlighting all issues raised during the Chairman's consultations, including that related to maintaining the support and interest of Governments' central administrations.

(e) Other matters arising from the work of subsidiary bodies requiring decision by the Commission

19. Under sub-item (b), the Commission will deal with any matter arising from the work of the subsidiary bodies which requires decision by the Commission.

Item 4: Election of Officers

Item 5: Other business

Item 6: Annual report of the Commission

Closure of the session.

SUMMARY TABLE

Date	Agenda Item	ECE Documents
Tuesday, 21 April: morning	1. Opening of the session - Adoption of the Agenda 2. Strengthening cooperation within the ECE region (a) Major trends in the ECE region: (i) The fragility of the banking system in the transition economies. (ii) The economic opportunities and challenges presented by the introduction of the Euro for non-EU countries (iii) The economic risks as well as the benefits to the region of increased globalization.	E/ECE/1358
Tuesday, 21 April: afternoon	2. Strengthening cooperation within the ECE region (continued) (a) Major trends in the ECE region (continued)	
Wednesday, 22 April: morning	2. Strengthening cooperation within the ECE region (continued) (b) Operational activities and cooperation with subregional groupings, interests and initiatives (c) Cooperation with the business community and NGOs	E/ECE/1359 E/ECE/1360

Date	Agenda Item	ECE Documents
Wednesday, 22 April: afternoon	3. Implementation of the Reform and preparations for the ECOSOC review of the regional commissions	
	(a) Exchange of views on the implementation of the reform, with the participation of PSBs	E/ECE/1361
Thursday, 23 April: morning	3. Implementation of the Reform and preparations for the ECOSOC review of the regional commissions (continued)	
	(b) Exchange of views on intersectoral issues and cross-sectoral concerns, with the participation of PSBs	E/ECE/1361
	(c) Relations with other regional, subregional and global organizations and institutions	E/ECE/1362
	(d) Commission Session	E/ECE/1363
	(e) Other matters arising from the work of subsidiary bodies requiring decision by the Commission	
Thursday, 23 April: afternoon	4 Election of officers	
	5. Other business	
	6. Annual Report of the Commission	

UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/ECE/1359
18 February 1998

ORIGINAL : ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Fifty-third session
(Provisional agenda item 2(b))

STRENGTHENING COOPERATION WITHIN THE ECE REGION: OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND COOPERATION WITH SUBREGIONAL GROUPINGS, INTERESTS AND INITIATIVES

The objective of ECE operational activities is to help countries to benefit more fully from the regular activities of ECE: norms and standard-setting, policy debate, and the collection and provision of information and data.

The following issues deserve particular consideration:

- **operational activities organized with sub-regional groupings and initiatives have a larger impact as they benefit all countries which are members of these entities. The Commission may therefore wish to consider whether priority should be given to demands emanating from sub-regional groupings or initiatives.**

- **the pace and effects of economic reforms are uneven. Therefore the Commission may wish to consider whether operational activities should be primarily directed towards the neediest countries in transition, taking into account the thrust and focus of the assistance provided by other organisations and institutions, in particular the European Union.**

- **participation in regular ECE meetings is the best way for countries to become familiar with the instruments developed by the Commission and to ensure that their concerns are addressed. As associated travel costs are considerable, the Commission may wish to invite PSSs to programme, as much as possible, workshops and seminars on the eve of their regular meetings, thus minimizing travel expenditures.**

INTRODUCTION

1. The countries in transition of central and eastern Europe have made significant but unequal progress in adapting their economies to market conditions by introducing market economy legislation, standards, pricing policies and privatization. Now they are entering the next stage of development on the road to their integration into the global market economy and the European economy which requires consolidation and strengthening of institutions, policies and practices aimed at obtaining the full benefit from market economy mechanisms. At this stage their needs for technical assistance, which are increasing in demand, are more specialized.

2. Thanks to the team of regional advisers, ECE technical assistance is delivered at short notice and without an excess of bureaucracy. Following the adoption of the ECE reform in April 1997, a Coordinating Unit for Operational Activities was established to deal with issues and activities which, within the ECE mandate, respond to the needs of specific groups of countries: countries in transition, sets of countries belonging to the same sub-region or groups of countries spread throughout the region but having a common interest in a specific issue where ECE has a recognised expertise. The Unit's role is to support and, when necessary, coordinate operational activities undertaken by ECE's Divisions, including by the Regional Advisers.

3. The forms and methods of operational activities vary according to the needs of the recipient country(ies) and sub-regions. They may involve:

- consultative and advisory missions, undertaken by both Regional Advisers and regular staff;
- preparation and implementation of specific programmes, both issue- and sub-region-oriented;
- preparation of project proposals;
- organization of workshops, seminars, study tours, training programmes, conferences and other expert group meetings.
- preparation of case studies, surveys and substantive documents;
- collection and dissemination of statistical data and information, using in particular the World Wide Web.

These activities are carried out in many cases in close cooperation with other international, national and regional organizations such as UNDP, UNEP, UNFPA, ESCAP, the World Bank, EBRD, OECD, EU, Council of Europe, Eurostat, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), USAID, etc.

4. Tables 1 and 2 describe respectively the activities of regional advisers and provide a list of workshops, seminars, study tours and training courses which have

taken place since April 1997. These include activities organized directly by ECE or those to which ECE has contributed or given support. Annex I of the report provides more descriptive and detailed information on the orientations of the assistance provided, by sector.

I. COOPERATION WITH SUBREGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND INITIATIVES

5. In the course of 1997, operational activities undertaken in cooperation with, or in the framework of, sub-regional organizations or initiatives have significantly increased. Agreements with the Central European Initiative (CEI), the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) as well as support to the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) and the soon-to-be launched Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) should reinforce this trend. Cooperation with sub-regional groupings and initiatives has some merits: it promotes greater awareness and use of instruments developed at intergovernmental level within ECE by benefiting from the political visibility of these groupings and it increases the country coverage of ECE assistance. In addition, it avoids the development by these groupings of competing policies or instruments which would create confusion at governmental level. The inconvenience is that this approach is less flexible and demands more preparation and coordination than country assistance.

6. Cooperation with BSEC, the CEI and the CIS includes the exchange of information, provision of expertise within available resources, and joint organisation and support of activities which are mutually agreed upon in advance. Table 3 of the report provides some specific details on ECE's cooperation with these initiative/sub-regional groupings. The cooperation between ECE and these entities has been or will be formalized in different manners.

7. A Memorandum of Understanding between ECE and the Central European Initiative (CEI) is expected to be signed in the near future. ECE is already supporting CEI activities on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and has prepared project proposals in the field of sustainable energy development. In November 1997 it was also decided to cooperate on concrete projects in the environment sector.

8. Cooperation with the Interstate Economic Committee of the Economic Union of the CIS, which aims at stimulating economic reforms and at harmonizing norms and standards, has been formalized in a Memorandum on Interaction and a Protocol for the exchange of information signed in April 1997. This was followed by the elaboration of a detailed programme of cooperation relating to a number of sectors (see Table 3) and the secretariat has established direct contacts with relevant CIS institutions. Cooperation with the CIS Interstate Statistical Committee has been particularly fruitful. ECE also cooperated with the CIS Interstate Ecological Council and Interstate Economic Committee in the organization of the International

Conference on Sustainable Development of Countries in Transition held in Minsk in April 1997.

9. ECE and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) secretariats have had several exchanges of views and letters on possible cooperation. This cooperation is already at work in energy and SME development, as shown in Table 3. In December it was agreed between the SECI Coordinator, the Executive Secretary of ECE and the Secretary-General of BSEC to extend, when feasible and useful, SECI projects to non-SECI participating BSEC countries. This will particularly be the case for border crossing and electricity grids.

10. The Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) was set up in December 1996 with the aim of encouraging cooperation among the countries of the region and facilitating the access of southeast Europe to European integration. The ECE was requested to provide SECI with technical assistance in helping it to discharge its tasks.

11. The ECE secretariat prepared a number of project proposals for the first meeting of the SECI Agenda Committee (January 1997), out of which six projects were selected (see Table 3) and lead countries for their implementation were identified. At the last Agenda Committee meeting in January 1998 one additional project was decided on - Interconnection of Electricity Grids. In addition, a project proposal on Cooperation among Stock Exchanges of the Region has been prepared and circulated to members of the Agenda Committee.

12. The SECI *ad hoc* project groups work along two complementary lines. The first one consists of simplification and harmonization of rules and procedures as well as exchange of experiences or *ad hoc* studies. The second one consists of elaboration of bankable projects necessary for improving infrastructure or training and the identification of appropriate funding. ECE contributes fully to the first line by sharing its instruments (conventions, laws, standards and guidelines) which facilitate good neighbourly relations and integration into the ECE region. ECE can also contribute to feasibility studies and preparation of bankable projects. However, it is the task of the Coordinator and of the Supporting States to find public or private financing for projects. In this connection, the results of the meetings of the Project Groups have been considered by meetings of the SECI Business Advisory Council (BAC) as part of the efforts being made to secure financial support for the projects and the involvement of the business community in their implementation.

13. The European Commission, the EBRD and the World Bank participate in many of the meetings of the ad *hoc* Project Groups and of the Agenda Committee; this ensures consistency between the different support provided to the SECI countries and avoids duplication.

14. The Special Programme for Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) was initiated by the President of Kazakhstan and supported by the UN Secretary-General who asked the Executive Secretaries of ECE and ESCAP to combine their efforts in developing and implementing a regional programme. In its approach it is inspired by SECI despite the fact that, at this stage, the very useful role of Coordinator may have to be played by the secretariat. Its aim is to develop cooperation among the five central Asian countries and to facilitate their integration into both Asia and Europe. Project areas should be agreed upon soon (see Table 3)and lead countries identified. It is expected that the selected areas will be mainly those in which there are few possibilities to make significant progress without regional cooperation, such as water management, hydropower energy, trade facilitation and transport as well as areas where exchanges of experience and harmonization of policies are mutually beneficial.

15. A special feature of SPECA is that it is jointly promoted by ECE and ESCAP with the assistance of the UN Resident Coordinators. The strong support given by the Secretary-General is expected to secure the contribution of other concerned UN entities to SPECA.

II. COOPERATION WITH THE MEDITERRANEAN

16. The Mediterranean area includes not only countries belonging to ECE but also those belonging to ESCWA and ECA. As the sub-region is heterogenous in nature, comprising developing countries, transition economies and advanced market economies, it is sometimes difficult to speak of Mediterranean interests *per se*. Furthermore, the interests of some Mediterranean countries are linked to those of other sub-groups of countries. Thus, for example, the concerns of some Mediterranean countries are being addressed in the framework of SECI. In addition, the Trans European North-South Motorway (TEM) and the Trans European Railway (TER) projects both have a southern European/Mediterranean dimension.

17. Despite the diversity of needs and interests, there are cross-cutting themes of general concern to most, if not all, countries in the Mediterranean area. These include issues relating to air and water pollution, water management, energy supply and consumption, transport and trade relations, all of which feature in the ECE Programme of Work as matters of priority to all ECE member countries.

18. In view of previously expressed concerns by ECE Mediterranean member countries, the Commission may wish to consider requesting the secretariat to intensify the attention paid to the specific circumstances of its Mediterranean countries in implementing its Programme of Work. In this connection, it is worth noting that the Inland Transport Committee supports the activities of three Mediterranean transport centres placed under its auspices: the Western Mediterranean Transport Study Centre at Barcelona, Spain, the Eastern Mediterranean

Transport Study Centre at Volos, Greece and the Transport Training Centre at Istanbul, Turkey.

19. With regard to operational activities, the specific mechanism foreseen in the Plan of Action for responding to the needs of specific groups of countries is the Coordinating Unit for Operational Activities (see para. 2 above) whose role will be to meet the specific requests of such countries, primarily through the organisation of workshops and seminars.

20. ECE had hoped to sponsor the following workshops/seminars in 1997 but was unable to do so, primarily because the expected funding from external sources has not yet been secured:

- Workshop on "Conformity assessment and quality development" (to be held in Cyprus)
- Seminar on "quality assurance and metrology" (to be held in Cyprus)
- Workshop on "Long-range transboundary air pollution" (to be held in Malta)

The secretariat has developed a list of additional possible workshops of interest to Mediterranean countries which could be organized by ECE, should funding be obtained. In this connection, it is proposed that the Executive Secretary convene a meeting of interested Ambassadors to discuss these proposals and possibilities for their funding.

21. In the meantime, a number of events have already been planned for 1998:

- A seminar on "Forestry training for groups that are hard to reach", a subject of interest to some Mediterranean countries, will be held in France in April 1998.
- The Mediterranean Gas Conference will be held jointly by ECE, the BOTAS Company (Turkey) and the ENI Company (Italy) in Istanbul in April 1998.
- ECE will contribute to a workshop on "Financing of Transport Infrastructure in the Mediterranean Region", to be organized by the Western Mediterranean Transport Study Centre (located in Barcelona), in the course of 1998.

22. ECE is also contributing to Eurostat's MEDSTAT Programme which aims at improving the statistical capacity of non-EU countries in the Mediterranean. Twelve countries are participating in the Programme including four ECE Members: Cyprus, Israel, Malta and Turkey. In particular, ECE is assisting in the project concerning international migration statistics, one of ten fields of statistics selected as priority work areas in the MEDSTAT programme.

23. In response to a specific request addressed to it at the 1997 ECOSOC meeting, the secretariat has initiated discussions with ESCWA and ECA in order to explore joint activities relating to the Mediterranean. Such cooperation is particularly important in order to promote harmonisation of norms and standards within the entire sub-region, thereby contributing to freer trade among countries of the sub-region and with other regions, and to better economic integration. In this connection, in November 1997, ECE participated in an ESCWA expert meeting and made presentations relating to Transport and Trade Facilitation. ECE has also helped to train ESCWA staff in trade facilitation procedures and envisages a number of joint activities with ESCWA in 1998. Given that ESCWA's membership comprises Mediterranean countries, all of the above is of benefit to these countries.

III. PROBLEMS AND FUTURE WORK ORIENTATIONS

24. The problem of resources has continued to hamper ECE operational activities for both recipient countries and the secretariat. On one hand, the serious financial constraints faced by the economies in transition limit their ability: to host meetings and workshops (since the ECE regular budget does not provide resources for this purpose), to implement operational projects, and to participate in ECE meetings. Consequently, these countries are not benefiting fully from their membership in ECE.

25. On the other hand, the human and financial resources allocated within ECE to undertake its operational activities are also limited and are not likely to be increased in the near future. Furthermore, the level of extra budgetary funds provided by member States for operational activities has remained at a low level. Although every effort to raise the efficiency of the utilization of existing resources is being made, there is a need for the additional financing of these activities by national and international financial institutions.

26. In view of the above, it is proposed:

- that the Commission decide that priority be given to demands emanating from sub-regional groupings or initiatives, in view of the "multiplier effect" of assistance provided in this manner;
- that the Commission focus on countries or groups of countries which are not given priority in assistance provided by OECD and the European Commission. In this connection it is worth noting that OECD has now reduced and refocused its technical assistance activities on a few non-OECD countries while the European Commission is concentrating its efforts on countries in the "pre-accession" phase.
- that the Commission give serious consideration to ways of facilitating the participation of representatives of the more disadvantaged transition countries in ECE meetings. This is considered very important since participation in regular meetings is the best way for countries to become

familiar with the instruments developed by the Commission and also to ensure that their specific concerns are taken into consideration. It is also the best way to establish a network of partners who could provide *ad hoc* advice or even channel bilateral assistance. Consequently, active participation in meetings, and, in particular, technical meetings, is an efficient way to strengthen the capacity of a country to implement ECE instruments.

27. How can such participation be facilitated? Some means are well known. One is direct financing of participants either by a donor country or by the European Commission, and here it is worth praising the efforts made by Eurostat to finance the participation of experts from those countries in many meetings of statisticians. The second is for each PSB to programme a workshop on the eve of its meeting and to invite participants from the concerned countries so as to minimize travel expenditure. This is only possible if the relevant trust funds are replenished.

28. In parallel with the above efforts, it is also necessary to invest in information technologies since advances in this field are creating new opportunities for the efficient and rapid exchange of information and ideas. Use of this technology compensates, in part, for a country's absence in a given meeting. In addition, it enables the secretariat to respond to requests from its member countries for assistance in setting up "home pages" on the Internet. The use of this technology in ECE's work, including its operational activities therefore deserves serious consideration and further development.

Table 1. Activities of regional advisers

Division	Countries visited	Purpose
Energy	Belarus	- To report on development of BYE/004/93 project to workshop on energy savings and energy supply to cities, 28-31 Oct. 97
	Bosnia-Herzegovina	- To conduct meeting SECI gas project, 16-20 Feb. 98
	Georgia	- Participation in consultative meeting on implementation of Energy Efficiency Projects in Georgia, 12-17 Oct. 97
	Hungary	- 2nd session of SECI Project Group on Energy Efficiency Demonstration Zones; Project development and Finance Workshop for Economies in Transition, 22-25 Sept. 97
	Russian Federation	- Development of regional cooperation in the field of energy BASHKIR Rep, 16-19 Sept. 97 - Consultations with CIS Interstat Economic Commission on Joint Project in Energy field and meeting of Energy Efficiency demonstration zones managers, 18-27 Oct. 97 - Meeting of Energy Efficiency Demonstration Zones managers of the Russian Fed.; Preparation of CIS energy efficiency policy project, 3-12 Dec. 97 - Discussion of Energy Efficiency 2000 Project with representative of Ministry of Science and Technology; To deliver lecture at training course, 11-16 Feb. 98
	Ukraine	- Discussions with management of Energy Demonstration Zones; To assist local team with elaboration of programme on energy saving in settlements of Ukrainian Ministry of Defense, 28 July - 1 Aug. 97

Table 1. Activities of regional advisers

Division	Countries visited	Purpose
Environment	Austria	- Participation in the 1st meeting of the SECI Project Group "Danube Recovery Programme", 2-4 Dec. 97
	Belgium	- Consultations, fund raising with the European Union, 25 Nov. 97 - To have consultations with NATO officials on transboundary environmental issues and consultations with European Union and NGOs officials on environmental friendly agriculture practices, 12 Jan. 98
	Bosnia-Herzegovina	- To consult with government authorities, enterprises, NGOs and aid agencies on environmental problem identification, project formulation and development, 8-12 July 97
	Croatia	- To consult with government authorities, enterprises, NGOs and aid agencies on environmental problem identification, project formulation and development, 8-12 July 97 - To assist in the preparation of the project "Integrated and sustainable water protection and prevention of pollution in agricultural, practice" under ECE Water Convention, 16-19 Dec. 97
	Estonia	- Consultation with central government, local authorities on chemical waste project, 28-29 Oct. 97; Contribution to Narva Forum, 30 Oct. - 1 Nov. 97 - Programme preparation for the ECE Conference on the Protection of Internaitonal Lakes, 27-28 Nov. 97
	Finland	- Participation in the 1st meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, 2-4 July 97
	France	- To participate in a conference on the Environment in Russian Fed., organised by the Council of Europe, 10 Dec. 97

Table 1. Activities of regional advisers

Division	Countries visited	Purpose
Environment (continued)	Georgia	- Cooperation in the Training Workshop on the Significance and Implementation of ECE conventions in Transcaucasian countries, 16-22 Nov. 97
	Germany	- Visit to the German Agency for Technical Cooperation to describe advisory activities , search for cooperation and sponsoring, 23-25 July 97 - Consultations with German environmental authorities, 19-20 Sept. 97
	Kyrgyzstan	- Contribution to the meeting of NEAP coordinators in Bishkek. Consultation with Kyrgyzstan authorities on needs and projects, 11-21 Apr. 97
	Lithuania	- Environmental Performance Review of Lithuania, 1-8 Oct. 97
	Moldova	- Environmental Performance Review of Moldova, 12-21 May 97
	Netherlands	- Consultations, fund raising and cooperation with the Dutch Authorities, 25-27 Nov. 97
	Poland	- Contribution to the International Conference on Management of Transboundary Waters in Europe, 21-24 Sept. 97
	Russian Federation	- Contribution to the seminar of the Moscow City Government on improving industrial safety in Moscow enterprises, 7-10 Dec. 97
	Sweden	- Contribution to the Council of Europe Conference on nuclear safety and local/regional democracies, 24-26 June 97

Table 1. Activities of regional advisers

Division	Countries visited	Purpose
Environment (continued)	Ukraine	- Participation in Steering Committee of Programme to Promote Sustainable Development and discussion on priorities of environmental cooperation, 21-23 May 97 - Contribution to the Stockpiled Obsolete Pesticides Workshop, Kiev, 11-13 June 97 - To advise concerning a bilateral chemical industrial safety project in the Azot factory (Rovno, Ukraine); to discuss proposals of projects with Ukrainian authorities in Kiev, 4-10 Aug. 97
	United Kingdom	- Consultations with Centre for Petroleum, Mineral Law and Policy, University of Dundee, Scotland; Preparation of project on legal advisory service under ECE Water Conventions, University of Dundee, Scotland; Lecture on ECE Environmental Conventions, University of Dundee, Scotland, 6-8 Feb. 98
	United States	- Lecturing at the World Bank, 2-6 Nov. 97; Fund raising with US AID, US EPA, UNDP, GEF, 6-9 Nov. 97
Statistics	France	- To participate in the Joint OECD / ECE / EUROSTAT meeting on national accounts and the organizing committee for the 1998 meeting of the Canberra Group on capital stock statistics, 3-7 June 97
	Luxembourg	- To participate in the meeting of the Working Group on EU Statistical Cooperation with CECs, NIS and Mongolia, 14 May and meeting of the Steering Committee on EU Statistical Cooperation with CECs, 15-16 May 1997 (14-16 May)
	Russian Fedederation	- Consultations with officials of GOSKOMSTAT, Moscow, to provide technical assistance for the improvement of capital stock statistics in Russia, 6-10 Oct. 97
	Ukraine	- To participate in the Meeting of the Steering Committee on the coordination of Technical Assistance in Statistics to the countries of the FSU, 20-21 May 1997 (19-22 May)
	United States	- To participate in the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on National Accounts, UN Headquarters, New York, 3-6 May 1997

Table 1. Activities of regional advisers

Division	Countries visited	Purpose
Trade	Austria	- Visit to UNIDO to discuss investment promotion, 18 June 97
	Belgium	- SECI Coordination meeting with the World Bank and European Commission, 22 Jan. 98 - To attend the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) Working Party on Trade and Investment in an Enlarging Europe, 5 - 6 Feb. 98
	Bulgaria	- To participate in 2nd meeting of the Project Group on Transport under SECI Project No. 4, 27-29 Jan. 98
	Croatia	- Meeting of BOT Group with Government of Croatia, 17-18 Nov 97
	Czech Republic	- Presentation and attendance at the 5th OSCE Economic Forum, 11-13 June 97
	France	- To attend conference "Review of Romanian Privatization", organized by OECD and to act as Rapporteur and Presenter of keynote speech, 16-17 Oct. 97 - To participate in US Department of Defence / AFNOR meeting on assessing national standards, Oct. 97
	Germany	- BOT Meeting, 11 July 97
	Greece	- SECI Project Group Meeting, 1-3 Mar. 97 - SECI Project Group Meeting, 15-16 May 97 - SECI Business Advisory Council Meeting, 26 June 97 - SECI Project Meeting, 1-3 July 97 - SECI Border Crossing Project Meeting, 8-9 Oct. 97 - Presentation of SECI and Border Crossing Facilitation Project to 2nd Balkan Congress of Freight Forwarders, 27-29 Nov 97

Table 1. Activities of regional advisers

Division	Countries visited	Purpose
Trade (continued)	Hungary	- Speaker at National Hungarian EDI Conference; Meetings with Ministry of Industry and Trade, SECI; and Meeting with PHARE Multicountry Trade Development, 18-20 June 97 - PHARE Programme Conference on Trade Policy and Investment, 19-20 June 97
	Kazakhstan	- Presentation and attendance at the OSCE meeting, 22-24 Oct. 97
	Latvia	- OECD meeting, to make a presentation, 24-26 Nov 97
	Poland	- Participation in 5th Polish National EDI Conference, including a special meeting with representatives of government to relaunch national trade facilitation committee, 3-6 June 97
	Russian Federation	- Conducting negotiations on issues of development of cooperation between the Republic of Tatarstan and UN/ECE, 8-9 July 97
	Switzerland	- Meeting with Ambassador Schifter, FIATA and Swiss Customs to discuss Phase II of SECI Border Crossing Project, 8 Dec 97
	Thailand	- Conference on Development Project Financing, 23-28 June 97
	Turkey	- Participation in SECI Business Advisory Council Meeting, 11-13 Dec 97
	Ukraine	- To hold consultations at Ministry of Economy, Ministry of External Economic Relations and the National Agency for Reconstruction and Development on activities of ECE which could be of interest to Ukraine, 25-28 Aug. 97 - To attend and speak at UN/ECE BSEC Workshop on SMEs and Foreign Trade, 13-14 Nov 97
	United Kingdom	- To attend the REAG meeting, 20-21 Oct. 97 - To finalize the programme of the WP. 5 meeting and make a presentation to BSA, Industry Association Meeting and likely sponsors for WP.5 Forum in May 98; Meeting with UK government on project in Estonia; 16-20 Jan. 98
	United States	- Meetings to discuss SECI project financing with UNDP, World Bank, US Customs and US State Department, 28-30 May 97

Table 1. Activities of regional advisers

Division	Countries visited	Purpose
Transport	Austria	- To attend a meeting with the European Commission TINA office, 4 Nov. 97 - To participate in the TER Steering Committee, 4-5 Dec. 97
	Belarus	- To participate in the International Conference on the Development of the Communication System, 28-31 Oct. 97
	Belgium	- To attend the G 24 Transport Working Group, 2-3 Dec. 97
	Bulgaria	- Preparation of SECI Meeting, 3-5 May 97 - To participate in SECI Meeting on transport infrastructure, 27 May 97 - To attend the Second Meeting of the Ad Hoc Project Group on Transport (SECI), 27-29 Jan. 98
	Hungary	- To assist in the TER Working Party on Infrastructure and Development (WP1), 11-13 June 97 - To work in the TER Project Central Office, 15-18 Sept. 97 - Upon the request of the Ministry of Transport, Communication and Water Management to give suggestions on the operation of the Hungarian Transport Training Centre, 4 Nov. 97
	Russian Federation	- At the invitation of OECD, to participate in the Conference "Regional Approach to Industrial Restructuring in the Tomsk Oblast", 3-6 June 97 - Request of the Ministry of Transport to give assistance in the development of documents for the International Euro-Asian Conference on Transport, 23-24 Dec. 97
	Slovakia	- To participate in the Round Table on TEM Financing, 12-14 Nov. 97
	Thailand	- At the request of ESCAP, to participate in a policy level expert group meeting, 16-21 June 97
	Turkey	- To assist in the BSEC Business Conference, 28-30 Apr. 97; Discussions with the BSEC Secretariat, 1 May 97
	Turkmenistan	- To participate int he Negotiating Conference on a Transit Transport Framework Agreement between the Central Asian Countries and their neighbours, 18-20 Nov. 97
	Ukraine	- To participate in the International Black Sea Transport Conference, 15 May 97

Table 1. Activities of regional advisers

Division	Countries visited	Purpose
Coord. Unit for Oper.Act.	Belarus	- Participation in the International Conference "Six years of the Commonwealth of Independent States: problems and perspectives", Minsk, 2-4 March 1998
	France	- Visit to the Council of Europe and consultations on cooperation and joint actions by ECE and the Council of Europe, 17-18 Dec. 97
	Hungary	- Participate and facilitate the discussion at the Conference on Financing SMEs in central and Eastern Europe, 5-8 June 1997 - Participate in the 18th Academy on Organization Science on European Methods of Cross-border Cooperation, 30 June - 2 July 1997 - Microcredit Training Course, 10-14 Sept. 1997
	Kazakhstan	- To participate in Workshop on Private Sector Development and Privatization in the Industrial Sector in Selected Central Asian Economies in Transition, 12-17 May 97 - Consultations with the President and the Government of Kazakstan on SPECA programme, 2-4 Oct. 97 - Participation in the Senior Officials meeting of Central Asian countries on SPECA issues, 25 - 27 February 1998
	Kyrgyzstan	- Consultations with the President and the Government of Kyrgyzstan on SPECA issues, 22-23 Dec. 97
	Romania	- To participate in the 1st SECI Project Group Meeting on Financial Policies for Strengthening SMEs, 25 Apr. 97 - Participation in Business Advisory Council Meeting to SECI on SMEs, 9-pt. 1997 - 2nd SECI Project Group Meeting on Financial Policies to Promote SMEs through microcredit and credit guarantee schemes, 2-3 Oct. 1997

Table 1. Activities of regional advisers

Division	Countries visited	Purpose
Coord. Unit for Oper.Act. (continued)	Russian Federation	- Preparation of the Conference coordination with OECD, 1-2 June 97 - Participation in conference "Regional Approach to Industrial Restructuration in Tomsk Oblast" organized by OECD, 3-5 June 97 - Organization and participation in the CIS Summit Conference, 18 - 20 June 97 - Consulting the authorities of the Republic of Tatarstan, Russian Federation, on the issues of cooperation with UN/ECE, 8-9 July 97 - Consultations at the CIS Inter-State Economic Committee and with the Government officials of the Russian Federation, 1-8 Sept. 97 - Participation in the Saint-Petersburg Economic Forum, Saint-Petersburg, Russian Federation, 18-20 June 1997
	Slovenia	- To participate in the 9th Plenary Meeting of the Working Group on SMEs of the Central European Initiative, 5-7 May 97
	Tajikistan	- Consultations with the President and the Government of Tajikistan on SPECA issues, 9-10 February 1998
	Turkey	- Participation in Business Advisory Council Meeting, 11-13 Dec. 97

Table 1. Activities of regional advisers

Division	Countries visited	Purpose
Coord. Unit for Oper.Act. (continued)	Turkmenistan	- Consultations with the President and the Government of Turkmenistan on SPECA issues, 20-22 Jan. 98
	Ukraine	- Consultations at Ministry of Economy, Ministry of External Economic Relations and the National Agency for Reconstruction and Development on activities of ECE which could be of interest to Ukraine, 25-28 Aug. 97 - Participation in BSEC Workshop on "SMEs - Their Role in Foreign Trade", 12-11 Nov. 97
	Uzbekistan	Consultations with the Government of Uzbekistan on SPECA issues, 5-6 Oct. 97

Table 2. Workshops, seminars, training courses and study tours

Division	Title
Economic analysis	Workshops 1. Workshop on using the census samples collection, Geneva, 1-4.10.97
Energy	Workshops 1. Workshop on the role of enhancement of utilization of primary and secondary hydro potential in the context of environmental protection, Slovakia, 13-15.05.97 2. Workshop on Applied Solar Energy, Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 9-14.6.97 3. Workshop on the power engineering and lighting engineering ENERGETIRA96, Slovenia, 14-16.05.97 4. Workshop on energy saving equipment and technologies, Kazakhstan, 14-17.05.97 5. Workshop on natural gas rate making in the ECE region and its implications for gas price transition in economies in transition, Holland, 19-22.05.97 6. Workshop on repair of urban gas distribution pipelines, France, 20-21.05.97 7. Workshop on geodynamic zoning, St. Petersburg, 24-26.06.97 8. Project Development workshop Budapest, Hungary 22-26.9.97 9. Workshop on rehabilitation of gas transmission lines, Ukraine, 24-27.09.97 10. Workshop on global mining taxation, St. Petersburg, 9-10.10.97 Training courses 1. Training course on financial engineering, St. Petersburg, Russia, 14-18.4.97 2. Training course on business planning and financial engineering, St. Petersburg, 16-18.07.97 3. Training course on business planning and financial engineering, Nijhny Novgorod, Russia, 16-19.02.98
Environment	Workshops/seminars 1. Workshop on monitoring data analysis and validation and reporting, Czech Republic, 7-30.04.97 2. Workshop on strategies for monitoring air pollution, Sweden, 2-4.06.97 3. Eighth Conference on urban and regional research, Spain, 5-9.06.97 4. Seminar on integrated assessment modelling for a multi-pollutant / multi-effect protocol, Austria, 4-5.09.97 5. Subregional workshop on environmental impact assessment in countries in transition, Moldova, 22-24.9.97 6. Workshop on management of transboundary waters in Europe, Poland, 22-25.09.97

Table 2. Workshops, seminars, training courses and study tours

Division	Title
Environment (continued)	Workshops (continued) 7. Workshop on protection against groundwater depletion in large catchment areas, Hungary, 7-9.10.97 8. UN-ECE/OECD Workshop on the role of economic instruments in integrating environmental policy with sectoral policies, Czech Republic, 8-10.10.1997 9. Second meeting of officials on land administration, Poland, 27.10.97 10. Workshop on the Polish cadastre, 27-28.10.1997 11. Workshop on critical limits and effects based approaches for heavy metals and persistent organic pollutants, Germany, 3-7.11.97 12. Workshop on encouraging local initiatives towards sustainable consumption patterns, Austria, 2-4.2.98 Training courses 1. Training course on the implementation of ECE environmental conventions related to water, environmental impact assessment and industrial accidents, Georgia, 17-21.11.97
Statistics	Workshops 1. Census Donor meeting to assist the newly independent States of the former USSR and Yugoslavia in contacting potential donors for the 2000 census round, Geneva, 26.9.97 2. ECE/UNDP Workshop on human development and social trends reporting, Bratislava, 14-19.11.97 3. ECE/UNFPA Census Training Project - Workshop for CIS on the results & Lessons to be learned from the Pilot Censuses during 1997, Moscow, 2-6.12.97 4. ECE/UNDP Workshop on human development and social trends reporting, Bled, Slovenia, 11-16.12.97 5. ECE/UNDP Workshop on human development & social trends reporting, Valetta, Malta, 19-23.1.98 *Planned:* 6. ECE/UNDP Workshop on human development and social trends reporting, Kiev, 4-7.3.98 7. ECE/UNDP Workshop on household budgets / poverty surveys, Minsk, 12-17.3.98 8. ECE/UNFPA Census Training Project - second Workshop on the Results of Pilot Censuses in Countries of the CIS: Problems of Content and Data Processing, Moscow, 31.3-4.4.98

Table 2. Workshops, seminars, training courses and study tours

Division	Title
Statistics (continued)	Training courses 1. ECE/OECD special (training) meeting of national accounts experts from CIS countries, Geneva, 20-24.10.97 2. Training course on census basic concept and definition, Moscow, 28.10-2.11.97 3. Special training session on consumer price indices for transition countries, Geneva, 27.11.97 4. Training course on the use of GIS in population census, Belarus, 16-21.02.98 *Planned:* 5. Training course on census data processing, Croatia, 22-28.3.98 Study tours 1. A study tour of the CIS countries to observe the pilot census in Belarus, 11. 97
Trade	Workshops/seminars 1. Forum on the prospects for promoting foreign direct investments in the transition economies, Geneva, 29-30.09.97 2. Workshop on new trends in thinnings, Slovakia, 8-12.09.97 3. Seminar on chemical research and the changing role of R&D institutions, Poland, 7-11.10.97 4. Workshop on trade finance in transition economies: practical ways to support exports and imports, Geneva, 27-28.11.97 5. Workshop on experience of the Czech Republic on issues of transition, Geneva, 10.12.97 *Planned:* 6. Workshop on economic aspects of clean technologies, energy and water management in the steel industry, Austria, 22-24.04.98 7. Seminar on forestry training for groups that are hard to reach, France, 20-24.4.1998 Training courses 1. Workshop/training course on marketing of sawnwood, Arkhangelsk, Russia, 24-28.11.97 Study tours 1. Study tour on forest and forest industries sector, Baltic countries, 4-10.05.97 2. Study Tour of the Iron and Steel Industry of the Republic of Korea, 9-15 November 1997

Table 2. Workshops, seminars, training courses and study tours

Division	Title
Transport	Workshops 1. Workshop on urban transport and environmental statistics, Washington, 12-15.05.97 2. Workshop on the improvement of rail safety in connection with the increasing of speed, Paris, 22-24.09.97 3. TER Round Table on latest development in the railway sector, Eger (Hungary), 22-24.09.97 4. Round Table on actual issues in transport on the TEM countries' way to Europe, Budapest, 23-25.04.97 5. Training course on programme suite for transportation project management, Warsaw, 16-20.06.97 6. Training course on software for decision-making process with respect to optimum timing of loans, Budapest, 20-22.10.97 7. Round Table on TEM financing, Modra (Slovakia), 12-14.11.97
Coordinating Unit for Operational Activities	Workshops 1. International conference on Higher education, research and industry in european economies in transition, Latvia, 4-7.10.97 2. Workshop on SMEs - their role in foreign trade, Ukraine, 12-15.11.97 *Planned:* 3. Workshop on SMEs and Entrepreneurship, Romania, 5-10.5.98 4. Workshop on Best Practice in Financing SMEs, Geneva, 14-15.5.98 5. Workshop on Financing Mechanism for Renewable Energy Sources in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, 10.98 Training courses 1. Microcredit Training course, Hungary, 11-13.09.97 *Planned:* 2. Training course on the role of government in creating public institutions whose task is enterprise creation and SME support, Italy, 4.98

Table 3. Operational activities for subregional groupings/special inititatives/programmes

Subregional groupings/ special initiatives/ programmes	Activities
Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)	- Joint organization of Workshop on "SMEs - Their Role in Foreign Trade", Ukraine, Nov.97 - Joint studies agreed to be carried out on: a) "Energy Situation in the BSEC Region" and b) "Development of Energy Policies in the BSEC Region, including the Related Priorities and Targets"; to be followed by a joint symposium on the latter subject - ECE secretariat will also support a feasibility study on the BSEC interconnected power system. - Review of the development of energy efficiency demonstration zones in BSEC countries and financial mechanisms for the realization of energy efficiency projects in these zones was proposed for joint implementation - The SECI projects on border crossing and electricity grids are to be extended to interested BSEC countries
Central European Initiative (CEI)	- Participation in meetings organized by the CEI Working Group on SMEs (Meeting of the Ministers responsible for SME development, Austria, Apr. 97; and 9th plenary meeting of the Working Group, Slovenia, May 97) - ECE/CEI consultative meeting held in Geneva in July 1997 - Assistance to the CEI Working Group on SMEs, in preparation of work programmes and projects for future cooperation - Two project proposals in the field of sustainable energy development, prepared and sent to the CEI secretariat for consideration, namely: energy efficiency and environmental security in central European countries; and analysis of the energy situation in and energy security of the region.
Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)	- Priority areas of cooperation discussed and agreed on: economic analysis and statistics, protection of environment, energy, transport, trade and entrepreneurship development - Organization of the International Conference on Sustainable Development of Countries in Transition, Minsk, April 97, in cooperation with the CIS Interstate Ecological Council and Interstate Economic Committee - Cooperation with the CIS Interstate Statistical Committee

Table 3. Operational activities for subregional groupings/special inititatives/programmes

Subregional groupings/ special initiatives/ programmes	Activities
Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI)	- Preparation of project proposals for the first meeting of the SECI Agenda Committee, Jan.97. Six projects were selected: a) Trade facilitation - actions to overcome border crossing difficulties (lead country - Greece) b) Transport infrastructure - identification of bottlenecks along main international corridors in the SECI region and short-term measures to remove them (lead country - Bulgaria) c) Financial policies to promote SMEs through microcredit and credit guarantee schemes (lead country - Romania) d) Energy efficiency demonstration zones network in southeast Europe (lead country - Hungary) e) Interconnection of natural gas networks, diversification of gas supply and improvement of security of supply in southeast Europe (lead country - Bosnia and Herzegovina) f) Danube recovery programme For each project selected, several meetings have been held. The ECE secretariat contributed in the organization of these meetings and prepared background documents and resulting reports. At the last Agenda Committee Meeting in January 1998, one additional project was decided on: g) Interconnection of electricity grids (lead country - The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) In addition, a project proposal on cooperation among stock exchanges of the Region has been prepared and circulated to members of the Agenda Committee. Efforts have been made to secure financial support for the projects and the involvement of the business community in their implementation.

Table 3. Operational activities for subregional groupings/special inititatives/programmes

Subregional groupings/ special initiatives/ programmes	Activities
Special Programme for Economies of Central Asia (SPECA)	- In cooperation with ESCAP, 32 project ideas have been discussed with the potential participating countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). Areas expected to be covered by the project ideas: development issues and policies, transport, energy, trade policy and trade promotion, environment, natural resources development and management, industrial development and investment promotion, and technology. - It has been agreed that that the Programme would initially be composed of five projects which are of common interest to all five countries and each of these countries would assume the lead country responsibility for one project. A Regional Advisory Committee to review the progress of the programme and give appropriate directions as well as working groups for each of the five projects would be established. The Programme is expected to be launched officially at a Summit meeting of Heads of State to be convened by the President of Kazakhstan in early 1998. - The Executive Secretary of ECE visited Heads of State of the five Central Asian Republics.

ANNEX I

Operational Activities by Sector - Descriptive information

Trade and investment promotion

1. Operational activities in this field have been focused on the dissemination of best practices in investment promotion techniques, promotion of private investment in infrastructure (road, rail, telecommunications, power generating networks, water systems, etc.) and stimulation of investment in real estate. In implementing these activities, the following trends have been observed: a growing demand from ECE economies in transition for high quality policy advice and a strong interest in the support of the private sector and international organizations.

2. An international forum on prospects for promoting foreign direct investment in the transition economies was one of the major events organized in 1997 by the secretariat (Geneva, September 1997) in cooperation with the Foreign Investment Advisory Service (FIAS) of the World Bank. For the first time a significant number of delegates representing city and regional authorities also took part, demonstrating the importance of regional efforts to promote foreign investment. On the basis of experiences described, the Forum provided a template of standards to assist city and regional agencies in developing investment promotion strategies and techniques, to promote themselves within their own public administrations and to secure more funding for their activities from their own Governments.

3. The UN/ECE "Build, Operate and Transfer" (BOT) Expert Group established in January 1996 has continued to develop best practices in attracting private finance for public infrastructure in each of the relevant sectors. The guidelines on "Public-Private Partnerships: A New Concept for Infrastructure Development" were completed in November 1997. To address the issue of stimulation of investment in real estate, a Real Estate Advisory Group (REAG) was established, with a task force to travel to a country on request in order to identify the bottlenecks and obstacles in the legal, financial and institutional areas for the good functioning of property markets.

Trade facilitation and development

4. Trade facilitation requires political will and technical knowledge. The newly created CEFACT is working on an International Trade Transaction (ITT) model which will help to obtain, at the ministerial level, the understanding and support which are essential to address practical problems at operational levels. National models for Hungary, Poland and the Russian Federation have been developed and the secretariat is currently working with Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Albania.

5. In the area of trade facilitation, ECE assistance has involved familiarization with, and application of, a variety of trade facilitation

techniques, standards and recommendations now maintained by CEFACT. It was extended to Albania, Kazakhstan and Ukraine in 1997. The World Wide Web has been increasingly used for the dissemination and exchange of information. ECE provided backstopping to the SECI Border Crossing Facilitation Project, in particular in the simplification and harmonization of procedures and documentation, and in the promotion of National Trade Facilitation Committees (PRO Committees).

6. During the year, contributions were received for the development of a technical assistance programme on UN/EDIFACT for the countries of eastern Europe. It is expected that this programme will be implemented during 1998.

7. Assistance to foreign trade development focused on risk assessment and management, cooperation of exporters with banks and insurers, and the organization of export finance in a private company. These issues were discussed at a Workshop on "Trade Finance in Transition Economies: Practical Ways to Support Exports and Imports", held in Geneva in November 1997.

Energy efficiency and energy supply

8. In the energy sector, assistance was provided on economic and technical analysis, on the elaboration of policies and institutions with particular emphasis on energy efficiency and clean technology.

9. The energy efficiency and conservation problems were addressed through the creation of energy efficiency demonstration zones and the development of financial mechanisms for attracting foreign investors to realise energy efficiency projects. Since April 1996, the Energy Efficiency 2000 Project has worked on standards, business planning, development of investment project development and new financing mechanisms. It has cooperated with the World Bank Project Implementation Units (PIU) and Headquarters staff on business plans, with the support of Norway, for investments in demonstration zones in eight Russian cities. A Guide to Investors in Energy Efficiency Projects in the Russian Federation, produced with the support of the United States and Norway, was published. This approach will be widely disseminated to other economies in transition through the Energy Efficiency 2000 Project and brought to the attention of investors through the World Bank Internet Site.

10. For SECI, a network of energy efficiency experts was established, an electronic communication facility was developed on the World Wide Web, and a plan for how projects can be implemented was put in place.

11. The technical cooperation programme "Promotion and Development of a Market-Based Gas Industry in Economies in Transition - Gas Centre" was set up in 1994 in response to the needs of transition countries for an efficient transfer of market-based natural gas policy and knowledge. Currently, the Centre is financially supported by 25 institutions from 19 countries, mainly the major oil and gas companies operating in western and eastern Europe and North America. It provides assistance to Governments and gas industries in transition economies to facilitate

the implementation of market-based policies, practices and principles. Since its creation, the Gas Centre has organized nine seminars or conferences on the above issues attended by over 900 participants from more than 30 member countries.

12. Two other priorities have been defined: the development of a training manual for gas rate-making and a database on key aspects of a market-based gas industry. The manual is designed to be an instrument used by trainers in individual transition countries to transfer knowledge on pricing issues and rate-making as quickly and as broadly as possible. The first basic training manual was published in November 1997. The database includes key aspects of a market-based gas industry and will cover all major gas markets in the ECE region. A CD-Rom was produced in December 1997.

13. With the help of a Task Force established by the Gas Centre, a crude assessment of natural gas demand in the SECI participating countries and a more detailed assessment of demand and supply possibilities for Bosnia and Herzegovina have been completed; six projects of new pipeline interconnections, out of 19 proposed, have been identified.

Transport development

14. Assistance in the transport sector focused on advice on the implementation of ECE conventions and agreements. In addition two workshops were held to support countries in transition. The first, held in Washington in May 1997, was to discuss ways to strengthen statistics on urban and regional passenger transport and its environmental impact in order to facilitate decision-making in transport policy, planning and investment. The second took place in Paris in September 1997 to address institutional aspects related to rail safety and to show the practical experience gained by railway companies in determining the technical safety requirements while increasing speed.

15. The Trans-European North-South Motorway (TEM) and Trans-European Railway (TER) projects remain the main mechanism for providing assistance to the countries of central and eastern Europe. Workshops, round tables and training courses, with particular emphasis on investment efficiency, assessment and evaluation of cost and benefits, optimal timing for investments, sensitivity and risk analysis, and benefits outside the transport sector, have been organized in relation to the TER project. Environmental impact assessment, road funds, data banks, international finance institutions, and concessions for roads have been the subjects of the workshops, seminars and round tables related to the TEM project. In the context of the SECI project on transport infrastructure, ECE assisted in the identification of a large number of small scale infrastructure projects along the Pan European Transport Corridor to be submitted to international financial institutions for possible financing.

Environmental management

16. The operational activities in this area are concentrated mainly on the implementation of the different conventions and the environmental performance review programme elaborated and implemented under the guidance of the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy.

17. Under the ECE Water Convention several field projects on monitoring transboundary waters were initiated, and assistance was provided to Azerbaijan, Belarus, Czech Republic, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine, and the Russian Federation. Funding was received from PHARE, TACIS and/or national contributions. Three major events have taken place since April 1997: a Workshop on Information for Decision-Making (Poland, May 1997); an International Conference on Management of Transboundary Waters in Europe (Poland, September 1997); and an International Workshop on Ground Water Depletion in Basin Regions: Problems arising between the Rivers Danube and Tisza (Hungary, October 1997). A workshop will be organized on risk assessment in Slovakia in March 1998.

18. A Parliamentarian Conference on Environmental and Industrial Safety Legislation organized by the Hungarian National Assembly and the ECE Regional Coordinating Centre for the Prevention of Industrial Accidents was held in Budapest in October 1997. The Conference provided a platform for the exchange of experience and information among parliamentarians, especially those from countries in transition, on issues related to environmental and industrial safety legislation.

19. The assessment of the national environmental policies and management of Slovenia from a pan-European perspective (Environmental Performance Review - EPR) was completed in May 1997 and published as No.2 in the ECE's EPR Series. The review of Moldova is nearing completion and reviews of Latvia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine have been started. ECE participated in the preparatory mission of the EPR to be conducted by the OECD for the Russian Federation and will contribute to the review itself.

20. A joint ECE/OECD workshop held in the Czech Republic in October 1997 resulted in a set of draft recommendations to Governments of ECE countries in transition on the application of economic instruments for better integrating environmental policy with sectoral policies.

Land administration and housing sector

21. In the area of Land Administration, priority is given to the improvement of cadastre and land registration which are essential to the development of private investments. Land Administration Guidelines were published and action taken to stimulate their implementation. An *ad hoc* meeting on the financing of Land Administration projects was held in March 1997 in cooperation with the World Bank.

22. In the development of the housing sector, ECE operational activities focus on the elaboration of country profiles and case studies on the implementation, at the local level, of housing modernization and renewal policies. Country profiles of the housing sector have been prepared by Task Forces in Bulgaria and Poland and

preparations have started for a study on Slovakia. A case study on modernization has been prepared for Bratislava and other case studies are planned for Budapest and Ljubljana.

Entrepreneurship and SME development

23. The aim of the programme for the development of SMEs is to assist countries to formulate national SME policy, design promotion programmes, develop the relevant infrastructure and help new entrepreneurs. The programme is focused on collecting and disseminating statistics and information on legislation and promotional measures; developing information networks; preparing case studies and information materials on SME development issues; formulating project proposals; providing advisory services; and training. Support was given to the SECI Project Group on Financial Policies to Strengthen SMEs.

24. To better disseminate experiences and recommendations to governments, local authorities and enterprises, a database on SME Development has been put on the ECE Web site. It contains more than 30 information sheets including definition, policy guidance, case studies, legislation, finance, etc., and more than 15 direct links to institutions dealing with SMEs. An Information Network among national SME policy focal points and institutions promoting SMEs was developed, put on the ECE Web site and lately enlarged by Greece and Turkey. An ECE document highlighting recent changes in SME legislation and promotion measures is being prepared.

Statistics

25. Operational activities in this field have complemented the regular programme of the Conference of European Statisticians and are closely integrated with the activities of other statistical agencies in the region. Their main thrust is aimed at improving the capability of national statistical offices (NSO) to provide social and demographic statistics through population censuses and from other sources.

26. Two projects on the preparation of case studies on improving the methods of measuring the capital stocks in transition economies have been started in the Russian Federation and Bulgaria. They are considered as pilot studies, the results of which would eventually be of benefit to other economies in transition.

27. In the area of population statistics, ECE assistance is carried out with strong support from UNFPA. It focuses on enhancing national capabilities in demographic data collection and research methodology. In particular ECE is the executing agency for a UNFPA regional project on assistance to countries in transition in Europe with the 2000 round of censuses and the implementing agency for a UNDP regional project on human development and social trends reporting in countries in transition in Europe and CIS. In both projects assistance is mainly provided through workshops and study tours which simultaneously benefit several countries. A Census Donor meeting (Geneva, September 1997) assisted the newly independent States of the former USSR and Yugoslavia in contacting potential donors

for the 2000 census round. A study tour of the CIS countries to observe the pilot census in Belarus was organized in November 1997. A workshop for countries of the former USSR to discuss the implications for census operations of the six pilot censuses in the CIS during 1997 as well as census funding was held in Moscow in December 1997. Two workshops were held under the above-mentioned UNDP project on statistics required for human development and social trends; one for the countries of Central Asia and Azerbaijan (Slovakia, November 1997), and the other for the countries of central Europe and the Baltics (Slovenia, December 1997). Individual in-country training has been given only to a small number of countries, although plans exist to expand it to benefit countries with special needs.

Research and development

28. The Plan of Action foresees that, in areas of work which have been phased out in the reform process, the Coordinating Unit for Operational Activities could organise, at the request of governments, *ad hoc* workshops or studies. It is in this context that an international Conference on Higher Education, Research and Industry in European Economies in Transition was organized in Latvia in October 1997 and addressed the following issues: national concepts of higher education and R and D activities; problems of promoting science and technology, instruments for supporting innovation; and international cooperation and its role in encouraging innovation. The extensive conclusions and recommendations adopted at the Conference underlined the complexity of the issue which requires further analysis and discussions in international fora.

UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/ECE/1359/Corr.1
19 March 1998

ORIGINAL : ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Fifty-third session
(Provisional Agenda item 2(b))

STRENGTHENING COOPERATION WITHIN THE ECE REGION: OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND COOPERATION WITH SUBREGIONAL GROUPINGS, INTERESTS AND INITIATIVES

CORRIGENDUM

Paragraph 20 should be amended to read as follows:

"20. ECE had hoped to co-organize, together with the host country, the following workshops/seminars in 1997, for which it had prepared proposals:

- Workshop on "Conformity assessment and quality development" (to be held in Cyprus)
- Seminar on "Quality assurance and metrology" (to be held in Cyprus)
- Workshop on "Long-range transboundary air pollution" (to be held in Malta)
- Workshop on "Solar applications and energy efficiency in building design and town planning" (to be held in Israel).

These meetings did not take place due to lack of funding, but if this is secured they could be held in 1998. The secretariat has developed a list of additional possible workshops of interest to Mediterranean countries which could be organized by ECE, should funding be obtained. In this connection, it is proposed that the Executive Secretary convene a meeting of interested Ambassadors to discuss these proposals and possibilities for their funding."

GE.98-20718

UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/ECE/1360
13 February 1998

ORIGINAL : ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Fifty-third session
(Provisional Agenda item 2(c))

COOPERATION BETWEEN THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE AND THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. Over the years the relationship between the ECE and the business community has developed on an ad hoc basis and in a pragmatic way. It has not been the result of a systematic effort either on the part of the Commission, or the Principal Subsidiary Bodies (PSBs) or the secretariat. In view of this, the Plan of Action emphasized the need to strengthen cooperation with the business community and recommended establishing a framework for this cooperation.

2. The contribution of the business community to ECE activities has taken different forms: participation in debates, technical inputs to norm setting (EDIFACT, spare parts of motor vehicles) or to background papers, secondment of experts (steel, chemicals), participation in or co-organization of workshops and study tours, financing of specific activities (Gas Centre). These contributions have had a positive impact on the quality and relevance of ECE work; while they have not created any ethical problem, this might have been the case. Therefore any systematic effort to increase these contributions should be accompanied (or preceded) by an agreement on guidelines to govern them. The important issue is to maintain governmental control of the ECE programme.

3. For its part, the business community has benefited from ECE activities in different ways. Secretariat studies and participation of enterprises in workshops and debates have helped governments better to know and understand conditions in which the private sector can operate efficiently; several guidelines norms and standards have been adopted which increase predictability and fair competition, networks and contacts between officials and representatives of the business community have been established. Nevertheless, the dissemination of ECE's products and their use by the business community is very unequal. Ways of improving dissemination might be discussed.

4. **FOLLOW-UP ACTION:** More systematic relations with the business community (see para.1 above) should be developed by the PSBs and the secretariat. Issues mentioned in paragraphs 2 and 3 above should be taken up by the ad hoc working group as foreseen in the Plan of Action.

I. INTRODUCTION

5. The note is organized as follows: Part I raises some general questions about the relationships between the business community, member governments and the secretariat. The ad hoc working group, set up in the Plan of Action, will almost certainly have to discuss these issues fairly thoroughly if it is to provide a set of principles and operational guidelines that will govern effectually the participation of the business community in the work of the Commission. Part II reviews the relations which have already developed between ECE and the business sector. The concluding part raises some issues that the ad hoc working group may wish to address.

PART I. GENERAL ISSUES

6. Over the past decade or so there have been many calls for the United Nations and other international organizations to cooperate more closely with the private business sector, to forge a "true partnership" or to create business councils or "development senates" where business can interact effectively with the United Nations. Such suggestions reflect concern that international economic organizations may not always be as sensitive as they should be to the effects of their activities on the business sector, or that these organizations are doing things, especially in the development field, which could be done better by the business sector or, at least, in partnership with it. These attitudes have their roots to a large extent in the widespread criticism throughout the 1980s and early 1990s of State-dominated development strategies and, indeed, of a wide range of State interventions in the mixed economies of western Europe and North America. This debate had a significant ideological component, but it did highlight the fact that market failures are

not automatically offset by government action and that government policies to promote economic growth often have the opposite effect. Some concluded from these arguments that the State should be reduced to the minimalist role that it had - or was believed to have had - in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but more realistic analysis now recognises that the State has an important and indispensable role in supporting economic activity: the real issues are to define more carefully the core functions of the State in promoting economic growth and welfare and to ensure that the institutions required to carry out these functions are efficient and free from corrupt behaviour. 1/

7. Nevertheless, whether it be a cause or consequence of this change in attitude towards the role of the State, the decreasing availability of public funds for infrastructure spending and overseas development assistance has led to a search for new forms of financing involving partnerships between the private and public sectors. This has occurred at both the national level (the Private Finance Initiative in the United Kingdom, for example) and in the international sphere (the World Bank's "Business Partners for Development" scheme, for example 2/). Financial pressures have also encouraged a number of initiatives on the part of the UN secretariat to seek extra-budgetary funds, including from the business sector, although the implications of this, both for the authority of the governing bodies and for the independence of the secretariat, do not always appear to have been subject to close analysis.

8. The various arguments about the role of the State in the economy have for the most part been conducted in purely national terms but, *mutatis mutandis*, they also apply to international institutions which provide an intergovernmental framework for coordinating the actions of national governments or for extending the framework of national rules and regulations to the international economy. In discussing cooperation between the business sector and an international body, such as ECE, it is therefore just as important as in the national context to be precise about the specific functions of the public and private sectors, and to recognize at the outset that public and private interests are not necessarily always congruent. Unless these distinctions of function and responsibility are made clear, calls for closer cooperation with the business sector may simply transplant to the international context the corporativism which most ECE member Governments have largely rejected - or are in the process of rejecting - at home.

9. One way of distinguishing the respective functions and responsibilities of the public and private sectors is to ask what justification there is for governments to intervene in a decentralized market economy. If all the effects of market behaviour on present or future welfare were tradeable and if perfect competition reigned in all markets, optimal resource allocation would occur without any need for intervention by governments or international economic institutions. In practice no economy meets all the conditions which

would justify such a fundamentalist, *laissez-faire* approach to the conduct of economic affairs. Instead, the economic liberalism shared by most ECE member States supports the greatest possible use of markets and market forces (competition) to coordinate economic activity while at the same time recognizing that the State still has an important role to play in supporting, correcting and guiding the operations of the market economy system.

10. It is widely accepted that in a market economy allocative efficiency may be less than optimal if there exist (i) public goods, (ii) monopoly power, or (iii) externalities. Whether in practice governments can improve on market outcomes is an empirical issue on which there is much debate; but the intellectual case for state intervention in the presence of these market imperfections is firmly rooted in economic theory. The actual range of tasks considered appropriate for government action is much wider than is suggested by just the three categories noted above. Under the heading of public goods, for example, modern economics includes, inter alia: the creation of the rule of law and the basic institutional structure required for markets to function at all; macroeconomic stability, the absence of which undermines the price mechanism and enterprise decision-making; as well as distributional and other objectives aimed at maintaining social and political stability or at protecting the environment.

11. With growing interdependence between national economies ("globalization") the various tasks undertaken by national governments are increasingly reflected in the agenda of the international economic organizations, including the ECE, but with the additional objective of avoiding conflicts between national policies. This is in fact a process which has been underway for a long time but it has gained increasing momentum since the Second World War as governments sought ways to avoid a repetition of the beggar-my-neighbour policies which characterized the 1930s. Progress, however, has been uneven: the extension of the rule of law to international economic relations has made considerable advances in the area of international trade, especially since the Uruguay Round, but there is still very little regulation of financial markets although these are considerably more integrated than product markets. 3/ Below the level of macroeconomic and financial policies, however, there has evolved a dense network of international institutions effectively coordinating national government policies for a large number of public goods and externalities, the two areas of government intervention into which most of the intergovernmental activities in the ECE falls.

12. The principal category of public goods 4/ with which ECE is concerned consists of international norms and standards 5/ which range over a considerable variety of activities from the standardization of vehicle parts and road signs to statistical nomenclatures and economic information. Standards lower transaction costs and, by increasing the extent of the market, provide potential external economies of scale for the individual enterprise.

international standards basically extend this process over international borders and enlarge the area over which arms-length trade can be profitably conducted. International standards, which eliminate the use of purely national standards as non-tariff barriers to trade, can therefore be qualified as international public goods.

13. Many national standards have been imposed by dominant firms and these in turn may become international standards, particularly if the country in question is a major economic power. But national governments often introduce standards to protect consumers from low quality or harmful products (quality standards) or to strengthen the competitiveness of highly fragmented industries where the free-rider problem prevents the adoption of national standards by the enterprises themselves. At the inter-governmental level, the adoption of international standards is to a large degree a question of harmonizing existing national standards, a process which imposes adjustment costs on those who must alter their standards and, in a world of dynamic economies of scale, gives a competitive advantage to those who need to make little or no change. In other words, the standardization process is likely to be a highly political one into which governments must inevitably be drawn to balance the interests of consumers and producers, and to balance the short-term interests of both against the longer-term considerations of national comparative advantage and the extension of the international market. In an increasingly competitive and global market, where any single economic power will find it increasingly difficult to impose its own standards on the rest of the world, the adoption of international standards is likely to be dependent on the success of voluntary negotiations between national governments.

14. The other important area of government intervention which plays a major role in the work of ECE concerns externalities, especially in the environmental field. A clean and sustainable environment should qualify as an international public good but achieving it requires collective action to deal with the unpaid side-effects, the externalities, of one producer's activity on the rest of the community. 6/ Since the case of environmental pollution is perhaps the most familiar - as well as the most important - of externalities, there is no need to discuss it at any length in this note. But what is important to emphasise here is the political economy of handling adjustment costs. Those who suffer the effects of pollution obviously want them eliminated as quickly as possible; but those producers who must internalise the external costs of their activity will try to extend the adjustment period for as long as possible in order to minimize the impact on the life of their existing capital stock. What usually ensues in democratic societies is a bargaining process, invariably under the auspices of government, which results in a compromise on the rate of adjustment. 7/ At the international level the compromise may be more difficult and take longer to reach (if only because of the absence of the coercive powers available to governments in their national context), but the process is still a highly political one involving the

reconciliation of conflicting interests, between producers and non-producers, between the short- and the longer-term, and between private activity and a wider public interest.

15. Given the political and collective nature of inter-governmental cooperation in the areas of public goods and externalities, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that cooperation between ECE and the business sector is essentially a matter for ECE member Governments, at least in the first instance. It is the responsibility of democratically elected governments to resolve the conflicts of interest between public and private interests in their own countries and then to seek international harmonization of national solutions in order to maintain open trading arrangements and reduce the risk of international disputes. Since a major part of ECE's work concerns the creation of standards and other forms of international regulation with a direct impact on business activity, it is normal that governments carefully take the interests of their business sectors into account - and indeed this is generally a necessary condition for effectual international agreements. There is, however, the well-known danger that business interests will try to "capture" the public interest and exclude or diminish the influence of other groups such as consumers and national regulatory authorities. Again, maintaining a fair balance of interests is the task of governments, but, as an international public institution, ECE and its secretariat will need to avoid being seen, justly or unjustly, as favouring one group of interests over another if its reputation for fairness, neutrality and objectivity is not to suffer. The risks of undermining ECE's credibility as an institution are likely to be increased if the request for more intensive cooperation with the business sector is left to the initiative of the secretariat. This is because it would be effectively drawn into one side of the political process of regulation and rule-making which is the proper responsibility of governments.

PART II. A REVIEW OF EXISTING RELATIONS BETWEEN ECE AND THE BUSINESS SECTOR

16. The ECE has maintained extensive and multi-faceted relations with the enterprise sector since its inception. Recently, when a number of countries have embarked on the transition to a market economy, the importance of the private sector has increased, not only in the regular work of the Commission (debates, norm setting and technical assistance), but also in the functioning of ECE. This is illustrated by its growing contribution in cash and in kind to the activities of the Commission. While in the 1992-1993 biennium the overall private sector contributions in cash amounted to some US$ 683,000, in 1996-1997, they had increased to some US$ 1,500,000.

17. The relations between ECE and the business community are mutually beneficial and it would be artificial to try to assess reciprocal gains, even if the impact of regulations concerning the approval of road vehicles and their equipment and parts, a/ EDIFACT or the Agreements concerning the

international transport of dangerous goods and perishable foodstuffs were to be measured in billions of dollars. Similarly it would be difficult to clarify, without detailed research, how the relationship arose in the first place, at the initiative of the Commission, a PSB, the secretariat, a business association or an individual enterprise. Instead, these relations will be presented according to the way in which they are being conducted: through participation in the work of an ECE intergovernmental body, as a member of a government delegation or of a professional association having observer status; through substantive contributions to a workshop, secondment of expert or funding of activities; through informal contacts, etc. Before describing the direct relationships between ECE and the private sector, some consideration will be given to indirect relations including through publications.

1. Indirect relations and publications

18. The value of indirect contacts should not be overlooked: making the results of ECE inter-governmental activity better known to the business sector (encouraging the greater diffusion of established international standards, for example) and encouraging enterprises to see ECE as a forum in which their interests can be represented by their member governments are both activities which have been somewhat neglected in the past, but they can benefit the private sector and also increase the sensitivity of the public sector to private sector problems.

19. Publications and the web-site are potentially powerful instruments for indirect relations with the business community. The most consulted pages on the ECE home page relate to EDIFACT and norms; an indication of queries coming from the business community. Nevertheless it is to be noted that still a significant number of enterprises of countries in transition are not able to access information technology due to a lack of hardware and software facilities. Many of ECE's publications include governments, the private sector and the public at large among their readership. This is particularly the case for the Economic Survey of Europe and various statistical year books. Specialized publications are appreciated by the business communities throughout the whole of Europe and North America, such as the studies and reports, which review structural and conjunctural trends in various industrial sectors. Examples of such studies include Structural and Ownership changes in the Chemical Industry, the Impact of New Technologies on Restructuring of Iron and Steel Industries, Forestry Bulletins and Market Reviews, and the Annual Review of the Steel Market.

20. Some publications are specifically designed for the private sector. Among those are technical guides for private companies in transition economies, for example, on Financing Private Enterprises and Trade, Legal Aspects of Privatization in Industry or How to prepare a business plan. Other Guides focus on assisting western investors to conduct operations in transition

economies (e.g. Guide for Investors in Energy Efficiency in the Russian Federation).

21. The ad hoc working group may wish to consider whether more could be done, and at what cost, to make this body of published work still better known to the business community.

2. Participation in official meetings and contribution to conventions and norms

22. Although the selection mechanisms are not clear, representatives of the private sector participate in official ECE meetings when chosen and nominated by Governments. Generally representatives of the private sector and professional associations participate more actively in the work of bodies other than PSBs. They may attend as observers or as members of a national delegation in which they are advisers and exceptionally heads. Programme areas where this occurs the most frequently are those which increasingly draw on extra-budgetary resources (e.g. steel, chemicals, energy efficiency).

23. Through its participation in official meetings the business community provides and receives information, influences the programme of work and contributes to the elaboration of conventions and norms which it will have to apply and from which it will draw direct or indirect benefits. The elaboration and implementation of legally-binding international conventions and standards directly influence either the business environment in general or that of a particular sector. Therefore, the standard-setting work of ECE is probably the most important for the business community in all ECE member countries. 9/

3. Participation of the business community in unofficial meetings.

24. Almost every unit of the secretariat organizes unofficial meetings, such as seminars and workshops, at the initiative of governments and in many cases the private sector participates and contributes.

25. Participation in unofficial meetings enables the private sector to be better acquainted with the stance of governments vis-à vis various aspects of the business environment, to discuss topical issues, and to convey its worries and aspirations to governments. 10/ Workshops organized by the secretariat for companies operating in transition economies aim at transferring commercial know-how to the emerging operators in the east of Europe. 11/

26. A problem of convening unofficial meetings relates to attracting not only large but also medium- and small enterprises (SMEs). As a rule SMEs do not attend the ECE informal meetings designed for the private sector.

27. Recently, the secretariat initiated a more permanent type of working arrangement with the private sector. Under the auspices of the Working Party on International Contract Practices in Industry (WP5), a group of private sector experts has formed a self-financed advisory group with the objective of formulating Guidelines on Build Operate and Transfer (BOT) financing techniques for central and eastern Europe. While functioning under the WP5 work programme, the group actually adds to the pool of ECE expert resources, requiring little secretariat support (see Annex I). In the view of the secretariat, similar advisory groups could be established in other areas where concerted action from enterprises and governments is required.

4. Resources provided by the business community.

28. Overall, the number of staff on loan from the private sector is relatively modest and does not exceed 3.5% of the total number of professionals in ECE. 12/ However, these staff members are concentrated in a few units of the secretariat, dealing mostly with specific industrial sectors - steel, chemicals and gas (see Annex III, Tables 1 and 2). The presence of staff from the private sector brings to the secretariat special skills and often a more practical approach to the issues addressed, which spills over within the secretariat. Companies also benefit from the contacts and a broader view of the problems of their sector obtained by their seconded staff.

29. In-kind contributions take the form of studies and reports prepared for ECE meetings by the private sector without charge. This type of contribution often occurs in EDIFACT, the Gas Centre and the Energy Efficiency 2000 project. In a few instances (for example the Workshop on Trade Finance in Transition Economies), private businessmen together with the secretariat form a steering group to organize an event. Sometimes, these two types of contribution are combined when preparing events specifically for the private sector.

30. It is also worth mentioning that financial assistance from the private sector may be indirect. For example, interested representatives of the business community sometimes contribute to the travelling costs of transition economies' participants in ECE meetings. They also sponsor and host informal and negotiating meetings in member countries (Energy Efficiency 2000).

31. The provision of resources by the private sector is a priori related to the benefit it can draw directly from the work of ECE. It is therefore not surprising that little private money goes to statistics and economic analysis which are public goods of general interest. On the contrary, as is to be expected, the industrial sector, gas, chemicals and steel, and also EDIFACT, attract significant in-kind contributions. However, it is to be noted that contributions have been insignificant, if not non-existent, in many areas of norm- and standard setting (environment, agricultural and metrological

standards, transport) despite the great impact they have on business activities. This may be related to the fact that governments want to keep control over these activities in view of their strong dimension of public interest (security and health of persons, environmental protection, etc.).

IV. CONCLUSIONS

32. Relationships between the business community and the ECE are diversified, flexible and mutually beneficial although they are unequally developed across the various sectors and activities of the Commission. Relations could be more systematic but the Commission should decide in what sectors and for what purpose to develop such relations in priority: contribution to norm setting, to operational activities or to the financing of some activities. Also, in the framework of the ad hoc working group foreseen by the Plan of Action, there will need to be agreement on a clear set of governing principles. These might include the following:

(a) The responsibility for bringing the business sector more closely into the work of ECE should rest with member Governments;

(b) The process of inviting the business sector to participate in the work of ECE, as well as its actual participation, should be fully transparent;

(c) Specific principles for determining when private funding is appropriate will need to be elaborated in order to avoid the risk of undertaking activities not approved or supported by member Governments or of promoting a private or not transparent agenda.

(d) Since the costs of disseminating information in an even-handed manner are likely to be high, it might be worth considering whether any increased cooperation with the business sector should be focused on representative business associations, rather than individual enterprises, and other groups in civil society;

(e) The participation of the business sector in ECE, and any consequent use of secretariat resources, needs to be scrutinized frequently to ensure that it can be justified in terms of public goods and externalities. Goods and services which provide only a collective benefit to a particular industry should not be subsidized by the international public sector.

33. These principles as well as guidelines for their application will be developed by the ad hoc working group, as requested by the Plan of Action. Rather than hampering ECE cooperation with the business community, these guidelines would aim to provide a framework for fostering such cooperation. The objective is to promote activities which are at the interface of government and enterprise responsibilities, which are of mutual interest and

which in the last result, serve the economic prosperity of the countries of the region.

NOTES

1. On this shift in the debate over the role of the State in the economy see The World Bank, *World Development Report 1997, The State in a Changing World*, Oxford University Press (New York), 1997.

2. It appears however that the World Bank scheme mainly involves drawing private companies into community development projects and other activities which have tended hitherto to fall under the public sector agenda. See *Financial Times*, 19 January 1998.

3. Considerable efforts are being made, nevertheless, to create a framework of agreed rules in areas, for example, such as services and intellectual property (WTO), and foreign direct investment (the Multilateral Agreement on Investment being negotiated in OECD), and to strengthen the prudential regulation of the international financial sector (Bank for International Settlements). International competition policy, however, is still at a stage of preliminary and informal discussion.

4. A public good is one which is available to all economic agents and whose use by any one of them does not reduce the amount available to the others. Welfare maximization requires the price of a public good to be zero but if production costs are positive the private sector may have little or no incentive to produce it; government intervention may therefore be necessary to ensure an optimum level of output, although this does not necessarily mean that the government must be the direct provider of the good or service.

5. Standards, national and international, are an especially strong form of public good because they are characterized by economies of scale: not only does their use by one economic agent leave the amount available to others unchanged, but the more widely they are adopted the greater the benefit to producers and consumers.

6. Such externalities constitute a "market failure" because they imply that the market price in a competitive economy will not reflect the marginal social costs of production.

7. On the role of "democratic gradualism" in handling such adjustment costs, see Richard Kozul-Wright and Paul Rayment, 'The institutional hiatus in economies in transition and its policy consequences', *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 21(5), September 1997.

8. Contrary to standards (established voluntarily by the business community), regulations are set by governments to establish minimum prescribed levels of performance/quality and are therefore a category of public goods.

9. (i) During the last 17 years, ECE has developed nine international, legally-binding instruments on air pollution, environmental impact assessment, industrial accidents and transboundary waters. These treaties are important elements of a common European legal framework and effectively contribute to a healthier business environment.

(ii) The Commission has also developed a wide range of transport agreements and conventions. These are being developed through the mutual cooperation of governments and the business community represented in official ECE meetings. These legal instruments cover road accident prevention, the transport of dangerous goods, and the development of legal and administrative procedures for transport operations, including customs. The TIR marking on the back of lorries is the result of an ECE customs convention which permits loads to be moved across frontiers without time-consuming and expensive delays at intermediate customs points.

(iii) In the automotive sector the establishment of longer-term international regulatory harmonization is considered to be the most important factor of global development and the ECE Working Party on the Construction of Vehicles is being recognized as the appropriate forum for this process. The work is carried out jointly by governments and the private sector and the target is a global harmonization of road vehicle construction and performance requirements.

(iv) The ECE is a leading international agency in setting standards for trade facilitation, which aim at eliminating administrative barriers to trade by harmonizing and simplifying procedures and documentary requirements. Hundreds of private sector experts participate in the work of the UN/ECE Centre for the Facilitation of Procedures and Practices for Administration, Commerce and Trade (CEFACT). This private-public sector partnership is a unique feature of the Centre as it forges new cooperative relationships between private business and intergovernmental organizations. Mixed participation in the Centre's work facilitates the dissemination of end user requirements in the ECE member States and in member States of the other organizations which actively participate in, or work with, CEFACT. The Commission also develops international standards in metrology, agricultural products and perishable goods.

10. A good example of such fora was the Round Table on Sustainable Industrial Development organized by the ECE in 1996. This Round Table gave an opportunity to governments and a number of leading industrial companies to exchange views about business conditions and opportunities in the east and west of Europe, and to make recommendations about improving the dialogue between enterprises and government. A more recent example is the Investment Forum jointly organised by the World Bank and the ECE in September 1997. The representatives of large multinational companies discussed legal, economic and administrative

barriers to investment in transition economies and, jointly with representatives of Government agencies and regional authorities, sought to find solutions to those problems. As a result, the ECE secretariat is now preparing for publication a compendium of best national practices in investment promotion, which will help Foreign Investment Agencies in transition economies to improve their relations with the business community.

11. Recent examples of such workshops are the training Seminar on Gas rate-making organized by the Gas Centre in 1997, the Workshop on Trade Finance in Transition Economies, and Workshops on Marketing in the Timber Sector (1996 and 1997).

12. For working purposes, we define staff as "on loan" from the business sector, if she/he is working for the secretariat temporarily, and is expected to return to her/his company upon the termination of the project. The salary of such staff is paid not from the regular budget but occasionally directly by the company, or more often from trust funds to which both governments and the private sector contribute.

ANNEX I

THE UN/ECE BOT ADVISORY GROUP: A CASE STUDY OF COOPERATION WITH THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

The UN/ECE BOT advisory Group was established in January 1996 under the auspices of the ECE Working Party on International Contract Practices in Industry (WP.5). Its primary objective is to advise Governments on how to attract investment in infrastructure - toll roads, railways, ports, telecommunications, power plants, water treatment and sewage systems etc. To this end, the Group disseminates information and provides advice on a new type of project finance - Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT). It includes the world's leading enterprises involved in infrastructure construction and financing.

Originally the Group's objective was to draft Guidelines on the application of new financing techniques. In the course of time, it has enlarged its ambition to assist Governments in putting its Guidelines into effect (in Croatia and Hungary, for example).

Cooperation between ECE and the business community in the BOT advisory group has the following advantages:

1. The Group provides high quality advice and support to ECE member countries. In particular, it identifies bankable pilot projects and helps at the pre-feasibility stage of project development. The Group also provides a neutral and independent judgment on the legal and regulatory measures, which governments need to take to attract private finance for infrastructure development.

2. The Group is self financing: members pay their own travel to Group meetings, including those in transition economies. They also make their written contributions to the Guidelines on a pro bono basis. The cost of such contributions, properly accounted, would represent over US$ 500,000.

3. The Group responds flexibly to the emerging demands. There is no trust fund and, accordingly, no lengthy decision-making about the allocation of funds. Thus a request can be received and a meeting arranged within six months. Since the Group is demand driven and funded accordingly, it will cease its activities once it has outlived its raison d'être.

4. The Group brings together west and east European companies and Governments to work together on concrete projects, thus creating a network based on public-private partnership principles. Requests for the Group's assistance are growing, and its networks are spreading: for example, through ESCAP, its services have been requested by the Government of Bangladesh.

ANNEX II

COOPERATION OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WITH THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY (EXAMPLES OF OECD AND UNCTAD)

According to the secretariat's survey, the cooperation of international organizations with the private sector takes several forms. They include the exchange of information with the business community; contribution of private companies to studies and reports prepared by the secretariat; joint utilization of databases; and participation of the business sector in meetings, seminars and workshops.

Representatives of the business community take part in the official meetings of UNCTAD and OECD as members of government delegations.

The work programmes of the international organizations referred to above do not depend on financing by the private sector. As a rule, they also do not employ staff on loan from private companies. However, there are several members of the OECD secretariat who work on specific projects and are remunerated by the private sector.

While the work programme of the international organizations surveyed is formed by government representatives, it does take account of the needs and aspirations of the business community.

International conventions influencing the operational environment and special studies targeting the business community are the types of output which private companies value the most. Examples include the OECD Accord on Bribery and Corruption and the negotiated Multilateral Agreement on Investment, on the one hand, and Economic Surveys and Investment Guides, on the other. UNCTAD produces the World Investment Report and statistics used in decision-making by governments and international enterprises.

While a more detailed examination is needed to learn and emulate positive experience of other international organizations in their relations with the business community, there seems to be no ready-made blueprints for this type of collaboration. Innovative approach is needed here both from member Governments and the secretariat.

ANNEX III

Table 1: UN/ECE resources from the private sector

Resources (inputs)	Structural units											
	Trade and investment promotion	EDIFACT	Steel and chemicals	Energy 2000	Gas Centre	Transport	Human settlements	Environment	Statistics	Economic analysis	Timber	Metrology and agricultural standards
Programme financing	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Staff on loan	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contributions in kind (reports)	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
Participation in official meetings	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	+

Source: UN/ECE secretariat.

Table 2. Staff working at the UN/ECE paid by the private sector in 1998

Division	Number of staff
Trade	3
Energy	1 1/
Transport	-
Statistics	-
Environment and human settlements	-
Economic analysis	-
Total:	4

Source: UN/ECE secretariat.

1/ An additional two staff who do not fall under the definition of staff on loan from the private sector (see note 12 above), are funded from the Gas Centre Trust Fund.

Table 3 UN/ECE activities and products having direct implications for the private sector

Activities and products (outputs)	Structural units											
	Trade and investment promotion	EDIFACT	Steel and chemicals	Energy 2000	Gas Centre	Transport	Human settlements	Environment	Statistics	Economic analysis	Timber	Metrology and agricultural standards
Conventions, standards and norms	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	+
Unofficial meetings targeting private sector	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	-
Publications targeting private sector	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	-
Advisory groups	+	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-

Source: UN/ECE secretariat.